



DAYĀRĀM



MAKERS OF INDIAN LITERATURE

DAYARAM

by

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SAHITYA AKADEMI

NEW DELHI

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To  
My Wife



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B. J. S.





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The latter half of the 18th century A.D. was a period of near-anarchy in Gujarat. The last remnants of the great edifice of the Mughal Empire were tottering down and local Governors or administrators took advantage of the prevailing disturbance to proclaim themselves Nawabs. Hindu rulers of small States and petty chieftains welcomed the Marathas in the hope of becoming free of the Muslim suzerainty. But their hopes were virtually belied, as the ruling Peshwas at Poona and their agents and vassals in Gujarat were more interested in exacting the annually growing tributes rather than governing the country judiciously and peacefully. However, the defeat of the combined forces of the Maratha Confederacy on the field of Panipat in 1761 was a decisive blow to the Maratha supremacy all over India. Two years before that, in 1759, the East India Company had made their mark in the political arena in Gujarat and had occupied the Surat castle. They soon set one Maratha ruler against another and the members of the Maratha Confederacy conspired against and fought with each other, so much so that

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when the British captured Poona, the forces of Scindia and Holkar were pitched against each other on the outskirts of that city!

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After the defeat of the Maratha forces at Panipat, the great Peshwa Balaji Bajirao, could not bear the ignominy and died of a broken heart. His brother Raghoba wanted to occupy the throne of Poona supplanting Bajirao's son and went to Surat in the hope of securing the help of the East India Company. The British got their chance. They set Scindia and Gaekwad against each other. The Gaekwads of Baroda who were the chief Maratha rulers of Gujarat were tempted, virtually, to disregard their *de jure* allegiance to the Peshwa. The Gaekwads were collecting, or rather exacting with military might, the annual tributes from the Muslim and Hindu chiefs of the province of Gujarat, including the Saurashtra region; and people, in their turn, were systematically plundered. The law-enforcing authorities were, strictly speaking, non-existent. The Gaekwads were unable to withstand the simmering discontent, overt and covert opposition from a large number of smaller chiefs of Gujarat and recurrent and fierce rebellions by some of them, and consequently threw themselves into the arms of the Company. Several Districts were ceded to the British as a result of political and military negotiations—a truce between unequals which was to result in virtual surrender on the part of the native ruler. Later on, the British Political Officers obliged the Gaekwads by inducing the petty chiefs to enter into various 'Settlements' which enabled the former to collect their tributes without the effort and expenditure of regular campaigning.

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As a result of political uncertainty and constant marauding by any one who could, life was uncertain and unsafe, and centres of trade and commerce were ruined. But to put it in the words of Dr. Anandshanker B. Dhruva, when decadence and desolation were all around, "vigour and vitality was felt only in the pulse of Dharma or religion" in the body of the Society. Wandering ascetics, local preachers, reciters of Purānas or works of Hindu Mythology and a number of poets and poetasters carried forward the torch of learning as well as they could, disseminated the traditional lore and educated and entertained the mass of the people with their poetic compositions for whatever they were worth.

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It was in this milieu that Dayārām, the last but very illustrious representative of early and mediaeval Gujarati poetic tradition, was born at Chanod, a small town on the bank of the river Narmada in the Baroda District on Saturday, the 16th August, 1777 (12th day of the bright half of the month of Bhādrapada—Vāmana-dvādaśī, traditionally considered to be the day of the birth of Vāmana or dwarf incarnation of God Viṣṇu—in the year 1833 of the Vikram era).

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Dayārām was an eminent poet, a colourful and strong personality with handsome features, a widely-travelled man with all the general knowledge available during those days, a person conversant with many languages of India including the Classical Sanskrit and a good scholar and noted poet of Brajbhāṣā. He was also a pro-

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ficient musician—both vocal and instrumental—, an ardent humanist who could appreciate merits even of his rivals and opponents, a keen scholar and staunch follower of the Śuddhādvaita Vedānta or Puṣṭimārga propounded by Vallabhācārya (1479-1531), a dedicated Bhakta or devotee of Lord Kṛṣṇa and a reputed preceptor having considerable following of disciples, lay followers and admirers. It is intended, in this monograph, to make a brief survey of his life and works.

### 6

Chanod, the birth-place of Dayārām, is a place of pilgrimage, a haunt of natural beauty as well as a town full of beautiful temples. Dayārām was born in the Nāgara Brahmin caste famous for learning, martial valour and administrative ability. His father's name was Prabhurām and mother's name, Mahālakṣmī. The Veda of the family was the Ṛgveda and it belonged to the Śāṅkhyāyana Sākhā. The couple had three children—one daughter and two sons. The eldest was a girl, Dāhīgaurī, who died of smallpox at a very young age. The youngest was a son, Maṇiśankar, who died when he was only two years. Dayārām was the middle child who was destined to be a reputed poet and lived upto the ripe age of 76.

### 7

The Yajnopavīta or the sacred thread ceremony of Dayārām was performed when he was eight. Those were the days of child marriage and the children of good families were always married early, as that was considered to be matter of prestige. Dayārām was betrothed immediately after his thread ceremony, but the fiancée died within two years. Prabhurām found

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another bride for his son, having fixed six hundred rupees as the "bride-price" to be paid to the girl's father. (It may be noted, incidentally, that in the Sāṭhodarā sub-caste of Nāgara Brahmins to which Dayārām belonged there was a scarcity of girls and "bride-price" was traditionally considered to be a must). But sometime after Dayārām's second betrothal, his father died and because the family was unable to pay the amount as fixed up earlier, the bride's father abrogated the betrothal. Dayārām was ten when his father died and twelve when his mother breathed her last. After the death of his parents, Dayārām went to stay at his maternal uncle's place at Dabhoi, a town in Central Gujarat near Baroda, known in mediaeval Sanskrit Literature as Darbhāvati and even now, famous for the architectural and artistic features of its old fort. Dayārām's maternal uncle, Raghunātha, was a clerk in the Customs-house at the port of Bharuch (ancient Bharukaccha or Bṛgukaccha) near the mouth of the Narmada, and he tried to groom Dayārām as a future clerk; but Dayārām was too independent and had no inclination for that kind of work. Some of his relatives on the maternal side tried to fix up his marriage, but it was in vain, as it appears that by that time Dayārām had decided to spend an unmarried life as Dayāsakhī (lit. "female friend Daya") or Gopī of Lord Kṛṣṇa, in devotional and religious pursuits dearest to his heart.

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Dayārām was a precocious and a naughty boy. Karanali is a small village near Chanod, but it has many holy sites frequently visited by ascetics and Sanyāsins. It had also become a centre of learning through the

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patronage extended by the ruling Gaekwad family of Baroda. It is said that a learned Sanyāsin named Keśavānand was staying at Karanali; the adolescent Dayārām met the Sanyāsin and requested initiation into the monastic order. Keśavānand refused to admit Dayārām as a disciple without knowing his caste, family and other credentials. So Dayārām composed a satirical poem censuring the said Sanyāsin, and his friends began to recite it in public places. Some one recited it in the presence of Keśavānand himself, whereupon the Sanyāsin just smiled and said, "That's a clever lad!". Some time later, Dayārām was swimming in the Narmada and went upstream to Karanāli, where Keśavānand caught hold of him and initiated him in some esoteric practice of yogic devotion, so that he became attached to Kṛṣṇa. Dayārām considered the Sanyāsin as his Guru or preceptor and composed a devotional Pada or poem beginning with the words *Guru moḡā, Guru moḡā* ('Guru is great, Guru is great').

## 9

Dayārām came into close contact with Icchārām Bhaṭṭajī, a profound scholar of the Puṣṭimārga, when he was only 14 years old. Iccharām Bhaṭṭajī was a native of Petlad, a town near Baroda and had settled down at Dākor, the greatest Vaiṣṇava holy place in Gujarat next only to Dwārkā. An *Annakṣetra* (a place where food is served to the needy and hungry) established in Bhaṭṭajī's memory is still to be seen at Dākor. Bhaṭṭajī has written a learned commentary, *Pradīpa*, on Vallabhācārya's *Aṇubhāṣya*, which is an interpretation of the Brahmasūtras from the Śuddhādvaita view-point. Dayārām met Bhaṭṭajī for the first time at a village named Tenatalāv near Dabhoi where the

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latter was giving a religious discourse. Even before this meeting Dayārām had composed some poems and had gone about singing them in his melodious voice so that Bhaṭṭajī had already come to hear about him. The sensitive and emotional temperament of Dayārām was nourished and nurtured by Bhaṭṭajī's philosophical thinking and serene personality; his doubts were removed and his intellect became calm and composed. Dayārām has clearly expressed his deep affiliation with Bhaṭṭajī and the benefit he derived from it:

*Sahu 'saṅkāno niradhār kīdho, malyā bhaktiniṣṭha;*

*Bhaṭṭajī mahārāj kahāvē, Dākordhī'sa jenā iṣṭa.*

“I met the great devotee; he removed all my doubts; he is the Bhaṭṭajī Mahārāj, whose god of faith is the presiding deity at Dākor”.

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Young Dayārām was smart and mischievous. He gathered round him a group of like-minded boys and teased the young women who frequented the banks of the Narmada to fetch water, and threw pebbles at their water-pots. Mostly, the ladies ignored the boys' pranks, but sometimes the latter met their match. One day a young lady of the goldsmith caste had the earthen vessel on her head broken by Dayārām. Losing her temper she caught hold of him and demanded the price of her vessel. Dayārām was penniless and to save himself from the wrath of the lady's husband and the ire of the respectable townsmen he fled to an adjoining village and went into hiding for a few days, while people thought, he had committed suicide by drowning himself in the Narmadā.

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But the heart of the naughty young man was that of a devotee and poet. Icchārām Bhaṭṭjī had asked him to travel all over India and visit important holy places to attain peace and stability of mind. His purpose presumably was to educate and tame the spirited boy. Travel was a very effective instrument of education, especially when the people had to travel mostly on foot. An ancient couplet in Prākṛit states, "one should travel all over the world, not only because one can see various wonders, and come to understand the difference between good men and bad men but also because one can know one's own self better by that means". Dayārām began the round of *Tīrthayātrā* or visit to holy places at the age of about fourteen, travelled continuously for twelve years and returned to Dabhoi, where he spent the rest of his life, when he was twentysix years of age. Even after this, he visited the four Dhāmas or holiest places of Hindu religion, viz., Dwārakā in the West, Badrī-keḍār in the North, Purī in the East and Rāmeśvara in the South. He had visited Nāthadvārā, the holiest shrine of the Puṣṭimārga, in Rājasthān, seven times and drank the waters of the Yamunā four times. Padas 2-10 of Dayārām's *Rasikavallabha*, expounding the philosophical tenets of the Śuddhādvaita in lucid Gujarati verse (vide para 49 to 52) make detailed mention of holy places in a meticulous geographical order, and it appears, to be an outline of the itinerary of the poet himself. Even a modern pilgrim travelling all over India formally beginning his *Yātrā* with a dip in the holy Yamunā at Mathurā, most sacred to the adherents of the Puṣṭimārga, can get some useful hints from the *Rasikavallabha* to plan his tour.

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Like the modern hitch-hiker, Dayārām was an indigent traveller. As a Brahmin he could depend upon the pious generosity of householders in villages on the way or on the sympathy and kindness of the fellow-travellers. He had no encumbrance of family and children and was in no hurry to return home.

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Dayārām had some interesting experiences during his travels. When he arrived at Nāthadvārā for the first time, he sang a eulogy of Śrīnāthajī, the presiding deity of the shrine, which is a form of Kṛṣṇa, describing his dress, ornaments, and so on in such a charming manner that the Head of the shrine or Mahārāj, who, as tradition prescribes, is a direct descendent of Vallabhācārya, presented him with a costly embroidered scarf manufactured at Banāras which Dayāram used on special occasions for many years. For quite some time, the Mahārāj did not allow Dayārām to leave; he continued to compose new padas for three months and continued to sing them to musical accompaniment before the idol. The pilgrims charmed by his devotional music made him various presents every day, but while leaving Nāthadvārā Dayārām, like a true Vaiṣṇava, bestowed all the gifts on the shrine.

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There were occasional sufferings during the travel. Roads were unsafe and generally infested by brigands and highwaymen. Dayārām and his party, after saluting Mahākāleśvara, one of the twelve celebrated forms of God Śiva at Ujjain, were proceeding towards Nasik. On the way they were met by another pilgrim-party.

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When both the parties entered a jungle the party of Dayārām was pounced upon by yet another party, who were bandits disguised as pilgrims. Three people were killed and others were taken prisoners. The chief of the bandits, named Mānājī Angre, who was a Maratha free-booter asked the sum of five hundred rupees as ransom from Dayārām. This was a very large sum looking to the standard of life during those days and Dayārām had no family or relatives who could pay the amount. He composed the Pada beginning with the line—

*Śrījī! Śaraṇ paḍyāne śīd santāpo?*

(‘O God! why do you give trouble to the people who have sought your shelter?’) Dayārām sang this hymn and other Padas before Mānājī for three days. The free-booter was pleased, he released Dayārām and his party and gave fifteen rupees to him as travelling allowance and bade good-bye to him with the words, “tum to baḍe kavi ho” (‘you are, indeed, a great Poet!’)

15

Once, on his way to Rāmeśvara, Dayārām had visited the shrine of Bālājī at Tirupati. The Mahant or Head of the shrine was used to extorting money from the pilgrims and did not allow them to leave till they satisfied his demands. Dayārām had hardly anything to pay and absconded at night. The Mahant’s men pursued him and brought him back. He was kept in confinement for four days and allowed to leave only when the Mahant was convinced that he had no money to pay.

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As a widely travelled man Dayārām knew a number of languages. In a Pada (devotional lyric) he has used

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phrases of Kacchi, Punjabi, Persian, Urdu, Telugu, Tamil, Hindi, Gujarati, Marathi, Sanskrit, Purvi or Eastern Hindi and Marvadi. This Pada deserves to be regarded as a curious literary specimen like similar Padas and songs composed by Jaina monks and scholars of Gujarat and Rajasthan who used to travel on foot in various parts of India. But Dayārām has also written a few independent Padas in Marathi, Urdu, Marvadi and Punjabi.

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It is remarkable that Dayārām has composed a large number of works—at least 47—in the Brajabhāṣā which was the accepted literary medium all over Northern and Western India. In this respect the status and position of Braj are comparable with those of the Apabhraṃśa language around 1000 A.D. which was an accepted and respected literary medium throughout Āryan India. The poets of Gujarat, even when they were writing mainly in Gujarati, have always accepted Braj as an alternative or parallel medium from early times; and compositions of classical Gujarati poets like Keśavadās, the author of the *Kṛṣṇakṛīḍā Kāvya* (1473), Bhālaṇa (15th century), Akho (1615-1674), Sāmaḷ (1690-1769) and others are apt illustrations of this statement. Several dissertations and monographs are published on the topic of the contribution of Gujarat to Hindi literature; and here Hindi, apparently, means Braj. Bhuj, the capital of the Kaccha region of the Gujarat State, was a centre where the literary and scholastic activities in Braj were assiduously cultivated under the patronage of the rulers of the former principality. A Pāṭhaśālā or School of poetics and poetry in Braj was conducted at Bhuj by

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Jaina Yatis or monks and it attracted students also from nearby Rajasthan. This school functioned and, indeed, prospered very well at least up to the end of the 19th century. Even after that it worked under the Education Department of the former Kaccha State and was finally closed when the State was merged with the erstwhile Bombay State of Independent India.

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This is just to indicate the status of Braj in literary Gujarat. Looking to his literary output Dayārām, we can say, is as much a writer of Braj as he is a writer of Gujarati. By temperament, travel and experience Dayārām was a linguist, but it appears that he became proficient in Braj because of his close contact with the Puṣṭimārga. Some of the holiest places of pilgrimage of this sect are in the Brajamaṇḍala, that is, the region around Mathurā. Most of the literature of the Puṣṭimārga except the learned Sanskrit works by Vallabhācārya and some of his discendents, is in Braj. Aṣṭasakhā or the eight most Prominent Poets of the Puṣṭimārga are among the most celebrated poets of Braj. In the beginning of the *Rasikavallabha*, Dayārām renders obeisance to Aṣṭasakhā who are 'one with God, the best of connoisseurs and kings of the family of poets'. Among the disciples of Dāyarām and their descendents there is a tradition that the poet was an incarnation of the celebrated Narasimha Mehtā, the great devotee of Kṛṣṇa and a famous poet-saint who flourished at Junāgaḍh during the Fifteenth century. However, Dayārām mentions in one of his autobiographical works, viz., *Anubhavamañjarī*, that Śrī-nāthajī, the presiding deity at Nāthadvārā, revealed himself before Dayārām and said to him, "you are

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the incarnation of Nandadās, one of the Aṣṭasakhā'. This gives one some idea what Dayārām himself thought of his own poetic merit and devotional attributes. Anyway, it is clear that he was a profound scholar of the Braj language and literature—a fact to which his literary output in Braj bears ample testimony.

19

No composition of Dayārām in Sanskrit is known so far. In Gujarati poems like Ṣaḍṛtuviraha ("love in separation during six seasons") he has employed syllabic metres of Sanskrit prosody in a very loose and incorrect manner, and it is evident from such compositions that Dayārām could hardly have attempted any versified composition in Sanskrit. However, it is clear from Dayārām's expository works of Śuddhādvaita philosophy that he carefully studied at the feet of competent scholars the original Sanskrit texts of the school and also heard and digested their sermons and instructions carefully, so much so, that his elucidation of the system is always authentic and the philosophical terminology is never employed in a wrong or ambiguous sense. Apart from Garbīs or Padas or devotional lyrics where he commands poetic height, he is precise and exact in the use of language in his numerous compositions in Gujarati and Braj on Śuddhādvaita theology, Metaphysics and Dogma which speak for his intellectual and scholastic attainments.

20

Dayārām could compose extempore poetry and impromptu songs on particular occasions and if no one happened to be there to commit them to writing the

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compositions were lost. The women of Dabhoi and Chānod still recite some songs of Dayārām which have not found a place in any of the printed collections.

21

As stated earlier, Dayārām was an adept musician. The atmosphere and tradition of the Puṣṭimārga gave ample opportunity to Dayārām to cultivate and develop his faculty of music. Music has a very important place in the ritual worship and religious services at the temples of the Puṣṭimārga. These temples have no Śikhara (lit. 'peak', dome-like structure) and hence they are called a Havelī ('mansion'). Music, in different Rāgas or melodies at different times of worship is an important and invariable adjunct. And music as cultivated under the patronage of the Puṣṭimārga is known as 'Havelī Saṅgīta', 'music of the Havelī'. Music in mediaeval India was patronised by princely states as well as by religious sects like the Puṣṭimārga which gave a significant and an important place to festivities and the fine arts even in day-to-day rituals. The tradition of 'Havelī Saṅgīta' is believed to have been started in the times of Viṭṭhalnātha, the son of Vallabhācārya and it has been a living tradition to this day. Dayārām had an innate liking and taste for music and being in close contact with the tradition of 'Havelī Saṅgīta' at different seats of the Puṣṭimārga he became a considerable musician himself and set his own Padas and other poems to music. He could sing well and play on a number of musical instruments. The forms of music cultivated in the Havelī temples are Dhruvapada, Dhamār, Cācar, etc. But for the mass of Vaiṣṇava lay-followers, especially for women,

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there are varieties of musical forms locally known as Dhoḷ and Garabī. So the Bhramaragīta, Veṅugīta, Gopikāgīta etc. from the *Bhāgavata Purāṇa*, so dear to the heart of all Vaiṣṇavas, are recited and sung in the local language as Dhoḷ and Garabī. In mediaeval Gujarati literature the name of Dayārām is the foremost as an author of Dhoḷ and Garabī forms. There is a superb synthesis of poetry and music in the Garabīs of Dayārām and its genesis is to be found in these cultural and religious traditions which nourished his native genius.

22

Dayārām was highly sensitive and generous. Once at a party in Baroda, his two disciples, Raṅghoḷbhāi and Girijāsankar were reciting some of his Padas to the accompaniment of Tambūrā or Tānapurā (a stringed musical instrument) and Naraghāṅ or Tablāṅ (two drumlike musical instruments played with the palm and fingers of the hand). Dayārām was present. There was a Bāvā or ascetic in the audience who stood up and taunted Girijāsankar in public for playing a wrong Tāla or rhythm on the Naraghāṅ. Dayārām could not bear the implied insult to his pupil and said, "everyone is liable to err; this is a minor mistake". The Bāvā replied, "an able musician will not commit such a mistake unless his ustād or teacher has been weak". This was a clear condemnation of Dayārām; he challenged the Bava to demonstrate his unfailing mastery. The latter took up the challenge and seizing hold of the Naraghāṅ began to play to the accompaniment of Dayārām's singing. Dayārām tried all the tricks to baffle the Bāvā and to make him deviate from the correct



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Tāla, but could not succeed. A large number of people gathered to witness the musical duel of the two masters, which lasted upto dawn. At last Dayārām sang a lyric full of such intricate Tālas that the Bāvā, at least once, played wrongly. The people cheered Dayārām. But Dayārām rose to the occasion, appreciated the wonderful competence of the Bāvā and gave him on the spot the gift of his golden necklace which was worth about three hundred rupees, with the generous acknowledgement, "I have never seen a proficient player like you!"

### 23

As stated earlier, Dayārām was unmarried. At the age of 28 he accepted Marajad (Skt. Maryādā), a life-long course of strict conduct enjoined by the Puṣṭimārga. In later years he came in contact with Ratanbāī, a child-widow of the goldsmith caste. Dayārām was 46 and Ratanbāī 45 at that time, and they lived through thick and thin for about thirty years. Owing to the difference in caste Dayārām cooked for both, but Ratanbāī kept house for him, prepared the paraphernalia of his daily worship and nursed him as he was often ailing. According to the account given by his followers, Dayārām said that Ratanbāī was his wife in one of his former births, when she treated him badly and now she was expiating for her misdeed by suffering widowhood in this birth! But he also added, "she is a divine soul, and that is why I have allowed her to stay in my house", and described her as "a partner in my weal and woe". Ratanbāī accompanied Dayārām on pilgrimage several times. Dayārām fell seriously ill in 1842 at the age of 65, and made his will or testament, in which he bequeathed Twenty-five Rupees to Ratanbāī

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“who has done my work and served me”. The will shows that Dayārām had six hundred rupees in cash at that time. It is said that Dayārām had given ornaments worth about a thousand rupees to Ratanbāī, but his relatives snatched them away from her after his death. Ratanbāī survived Dayārām by about fourteen years and spent her last days in distress and penury remembering the personality whom she loved, served and respected.

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Though Dayārām was a staunch adherent of the Puṣṭimārga, his independent cast of mind, his sense of self-respect and his impetuous nature sometimes brought him into conflict with the establishment. He could not see eye to eye with some descendents of Vallabhcārya who acted as Heads of the Holy places of the sect. Once his Guru, Purusottamajī Mahārāja from Bundi-Kota, was on a visit to Dabhoi. Some of his followers told Mahārāj that Dayārām was a man of irascible nature and that he should be debarred from visiting the temple and from *Darśana* or having a glimpse of the deity. This was a severe penalty that could be meted out to a Vaiṣṇava only in extreme cases, but the Mahārāj agreed to it. Dayārām, thereupon, composed a poem censuring the action of the Mahārāj, and sent it to him. Appreciating the care-free nature of Dayārām, the Mahārāj went to Dayārām's house, but Dayārām closed his doors and returned to him his necklace of beads of the wood of the Tulsi plant, the emblem of his being a Vaiṣṇava. The Mahārāj was visibly moved and became apologetic. Dayārām also returned the courtesy, gave as a present to the Mahārāj two of his own books; Mahārāj put the necklace again around Dayārām's neck.

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When another Mahārāj came to Dabhoi the Vaiṣṇavas went to him to pay their respects. Dayārām was specially sent for, but replied that he could come only if his seat would not be considered lower than that of the Mahārāj, because he was, in no way, inferior to him. Though the Mahārāj did not like this, he complied with his demand. On his arrival when Dayārām was going to occupy the seat as high as that of the Mahārāj, a follower of the Mahārāj removed it, and Dayārām became extremely angry, broke up the Tulsi necklace and handed the pieces to the person who had come to invite him on behalf of the Mahārāj. Then the Mahārāj personally went to Dayārām's place, but the latter did not allow him to enter. Mahārāj became, naturally, displeased and one of his followers who was rendering some financial assistance to Dayārām discontinued it. But Dayārām did not care.

26

Though Dayārām was, at times, short-tempered his views about the duties of spiritual leaders of his times were correct, and that way he was ahead of his times. He was convinced that at least some of them were responsible for leading their followers into wrong paths, away from the tenets of Bhakti and piety and the practical philosophy of Kṛṣṇāśraya or the "taking of refuge in Kṛṣṇa" taught by Vallabhācārya for the benefit of the common people. According to Dahyābhāī, one of Dayārām's disciples, the latter severely castigated the immoral behaviour of a Mahārāj at Kānkaroli in Rajasthan. To put it in the words of Dahyābhāī, Dayārām in effect, declared that "to serve such wicked people is a sin".

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Dayārām spent most of his time at Dabhoi except when he was away at distant places of pilgrimage. But he often visited Baroda and Chāṇod which are only a few miles from Dabhoi and went to Dākor frequently. He also visited Sinor, a small town on the bank of the Narmada, a centre of traditional Vedic learning—especially in the Atharvaveda—and a place inhabited by many Vaiṣṇavas. He had spent some of his younger days at Bharuch with his maternal uncle. Chīmanlāl, a prominent Vaiṣṇava citizen of Bharuch, was his intimate friend and even in his later days he often visited Bharuch. He had copied down the Gītagovinda of Jayadeva in his own hand at Bharuch and the manuscript-copy is still preserved. From a reference in one of his writings, it is evident that Dayārām did some of his work at Surat. It is probable that Dayārām had also visited Ahmedabad. He had some correspondence in poetry with one Kṛṣṇarām, a learned Brahmin, of Ahmedabad who castigated Dayārām for referring to the followers of Saṅkarācārya's Kevalādvaita in slanderous terms using adjectives like Kāṇā ('one-eyed') and Vaṇamati ('devoid of intellect') in his *Rasikavallabha*. Kṛṣṇarām said that one can have strong convictions, but it is not proper to throw abuses at people who hold a different religious belief.

28

His sense of humour and mischievous spirit did not leave Dayārām even in his mature years. Pilgrims used to visit Chāṇod to have a dip in the holy Narmada. Once the ladies of the family of Fatehsinha Gaekwad, the then ruler of Baroda, came to Chāṇod, and guards were posted on the Ghāṭ (steps on the river-

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bank) and the adjoining road when the ladies came. Dayārām went to the Ghāt surreptitiously with one of his boyish pupils, Nāraṅ of the goldsmith caste; Nāraṅ began the recitation of Dayārām's Padas with his melodious girlish voice. The ladies of the harem were charmed and offered them some gold coins under an impression that they were some wandering mendicants or poor needy Brahmīns. Dayārām declined the offer saying that they could not accept Dakṣiṇā or gift unless they knew who the donor was. Thereupon the queen removed her veil and offered him ten gold coins, but Dayārām requested her to give the amount to the young boy. The news naturally reached Baroda and an invitation was extended to the poet to visit the court. Dayārām went to the Durbar, but there were some political disturbances and intrigues, and he was not accorded a warm reception. Thereupon Dayārām decided not to seek or ask for any political patronage and not expect anything from any one and leave everything to Kṛṣṇa. In one of his popular Padas he has sung—

*Citta tuṅ śīdane cintā dhare?*

*Kṛṣṇane Karavūṅ hoy te Kare.*

(O my mind! Why do you worry? Kṛṣṇa will do what he wills.)

29

Though proud by nature, Dayārām never forgot gratitude for acts of generosity done to him or his dear pupils. Two of his pupils, viz., Raṅghodbhaṅ and Girijāśankar had once gone to Ahmedabad to give religious sermons and they had put up at the house of a woman of the goldsmith caste who was known as *Jījī* ('grandmother') in her locality on account of her age.

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At that time, there was a *Corāsī* (lit. 'eightyfour', that is, a grand dinner served to all the 84 subcastes of the Brahmins) in Ahmedabad. These two young men had not brought with them their *Pītāambaras* (or costly silken dhotis in which the Brahmins were expected to join the dinner), and as pupils of the reputed poet Dayārām they did not like to wear cheap silken apparel that they had and decided not to attend the dinner. The old woman asked the reason, and did not like her guests not attending the dinner because they didn't have clothing appropriate to the occasion. She got two embroidered *Pītāambaras* for them and also gave some ornaments to wear round the neck. The two young men went to the dinner and thanked the woman. When Dayārām came to know this, he was very glad and invited the old lady to Chāṇod for *Narmadā-snān* ('dip in the holy river Narmadā'), extended his warm hospitality to her and said, "by giving costly clothes to my sons you have saved my prestige; now you are my sister". He recited many of his Padas before the lady and then bade her farewell.

30

Dayārām was very humble whenever he saw that he was in the presence of real merit. Once he had gone to Dākor on a pilgrimage. There in the shrine of the presiding image of Viṣṇu, popularly known as Raṅchhoḍjī, he heard some of his own compositions sung with a wonderfully melodious voice by a Nāgara lady from Petlad. Dayaram was thrilled and said with a sense of deep appreciation, "Please give me your sweet voice; I am no more than a mere versifier".

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Dayārām had a large group of devoted disciples and pupils. They were not confined to the Brahmin community only, but came from all the castes and sub-castes of Gujarat. Some of them were very proficient in Music and he considered especially Raṅchhoḍbhāī and Girijāsaṅkar to be the inheritors of his own Muse. Dayārām considered his Tambūrā or Tānpurā and his books to be his most precious possessions. During his last days he gave his books to Raṅchhoḍbhāī and his Tambūrā to Girijāsaṅkar and advised them to earn their livelihood only by singing his songs.

32

Dayārām had no "sense" of money. He earned about two hundred rupees per year by way of gifts from admirers. This was not a very small sum looking to the standard of living during his days. But he had hardly saved anything. When a person died, it was customary on the part of his heirs to give a caste-dinner. But sometimes wealthy persons who happened to have no heirs gave a feast during their life-time; this is known as *Jivita-Kriyā* (lit. 'ritual while a person is living'). Dayārām decided to give this customary dinner and his disciples, pupils, friends and admirers from various parts of Gujarat sent their contributions to defray expenses. The total contributions amounted to two thousand rupees and he actually spent nearly four thousand!

33

Dayārām is one of the very few mediaeval poets and scholars whose exact portrait is available and not only samples of his handwriting but the actual autograph copies of his own works are extant. He had very handsome features and his refined taste bordered almost

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on dandyism. He got his turban dyed at Nadiad, a nearby town well-known for good dyeing, and paid five ruppees for each dyeing, when ordinary rate was four to eight annas, that is, twentyfive to fifty paisa. He used to eat thirty to forty betel-leaves everyday and always kept his lips red. His silk-bordered dhoti was the best available in India, manufactured at Nagpur and cost from ten to twelve rupees each. His Angarkhūā (long coat of old type with strings for fastening instead of buttons) was made of high quality Dacca muslin with embroidery work at neck and sleeves. He paid three rupees to the tailor for making this apparel of his choice. It is said that once the dress was too tight at the shoulders; Dayārām scolded the tailor, who tried to explain his position, but the poet was so angry that he threw his ink-and-pen-stand at him; the tailor ran away and did not return for the payment of his bill for a long time! Dayārām was very fastidious about arranging the front folds of his Dhoti and eye-witnesses aver that during his youthful days he spent as much as half an hour after that! His scarf or shoulder cloth and embroidered shoes were the best available in those days.

34

This thoroughness and refinement were also seen reflected in Dayārām's insistence on correctness of language and pronunciation. Once a member of the peasant caste of Pāṭidār from Charotar, a region of Central Gujarat, had come to Dabhoi and he was singing loudly one of Dayārām's poems, viz., Hanumān-Garuḍa Saṃvād ('dialogue between Hanumān and Garuḍa') describing a lively conversation and wordy duel between Hanumān, the faithful servant of Rāma and Garuḍa, the

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winged carrier —vāhana—of Viṣṇu). Dayārām heard the recitation which was incorrect, faulty and full of various mistakes. He called the man, scolded him, compelled him to take an oath and laid on him a solemn charge in these words: “Now onwards if you sing any of my poems, you will incur the sin of Brahmahatyā, killing of a Brahmān”.

35

Ananyāśraya or “non-dependence on any one (except Kṛṣṇa)” is an article of faith with the followers of the Puṣṭimārga. Once Dayārām told Chimanlāl, his closest friend, “What can I do? I have taken a vow not to write poetry about any one except Kṛṣṇa; otherwise, I would have made you immortal”. There is a noteworthy incident about Dayārām’s unfailing adherence to this article of faith. There was a very wealthy gentleman named Gopālrao Mairāḷ in Baroda. He hailed from the South, was born with a silver spoon in his mouth and was one of the financiers of the rulers of Baroda. He was a generous philanthropist and a patron of art and architecture. His munificence was proverbial. He had built a big Ghāṭ on the bank of the Narmada at Sinor. He was a votary of Gaṇapati or Gaṇeśa and had built two magnificent temples of the deity—one at Sinor and another at Baroda near his house. These two temples are preserved in excellent condition to this day. Several hundred Brahmins were treated as honoured guests and served their meals everyday at his house. Gopālrao had heard about Dayārām’s reputation as a poet and sent him an invitation at Dabhoi, with a letter requesting him “to compose hymns in praise of Gaṇeśa, the God of my faith” and he promised the poet a sumptuous annuity in return.

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Dayārām immediately composed a poem and sent it to Gopālrao with the messenger who had brought him the invitation. Initial four lines of the poem are as follows and these throw light on the strong mental make up and religious conviction of Dayārām—

*EK vāyo Gopijanavallabh, nahi Svāmi bijo ;  
Nahi svāmi bijo re, māre nahi svāmi bijo.  
Avar koīnuṅ kām na māre, rījho ke khījo ;  
Kṛṣṇa kare te pramāṇ, kārāj vaṇaso ke sijho.*

(‘I have married the beloved of the Gopis, I have no other Lord. I do not want the help of anyone else—let him be pleased or become angry. Whatever Kṛṣṇa does is my only sanction, my law; I do not care if my worldly end is spoiled or attained thereby’.)

36

We do not know if Dāyarām came in contact with any literary celebrity of his time. But at least his casual meeting with Premānand Svāmi (1784-1855), an ascetic and celebrated poet of the Svāmīnārāyaṇa sect, is on record. Sahajānand Svāmī (1781-1830), also known as Svāmīnārāyaṇa, was born at Chhapaiya near Ayodhyā, but his work was done in Gujarat and though he died at a comparatively young age of 49, he commanded a large following. His mission was, partially like a peace-keeping force and his precepts and ethics in action were largely influential in pacifying and reforming the marauding tribes of the region and the great mass of people belonging to the lower classes who were hardly touched by the spiritual Heads of the other sects and their lay preachers. Sahajānand preached the Bhakti of Kṛṣṇa, but his methods were strictly puritani-

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cal and one may be justified in stating that his creed was, in a way, a reaction or protest against the epicurean practices which came into vogue among the followers of Vallabhācārya. Premānand Svāmī belonged to a Sāṭhodarā Nāgar Brahmin family before he entered the ascetic order of Sahajānand and was known as Premasakhī because of his ardent Bhakti-poetry. Premasakhī and Dayāsakhī (Dayārām) were eager to meet each other. Premanand Svāmī being an ascetic could not go to the place of a house-holder like Dayārām, the latter because of his adherence to the Puṣṭimārga and probably because of a latent dislike he had for the new sect of Svāmīnārāyaṇa could not go to the former's abode. Once, meeting in a thoroughfare of Ḍabhoi by chance, they greeted each other and warmly appreciated each other's poetry which dealt with the same theme, namely, the Bhakti of Kṛṣṇa, a theme of perennial interest. A popular Pada beginning with the line—..

*Rūḍā dīso cho rājendra,  
mandir māre avatā re*

(‘O Lord! you look so handsome when you are seen coming to visit my house’.) is ascribed to Dayārām, but a scholar has advanced an opinion that originally it was a composition of Premānand Svāmī or Premasakhī praising his preceptor Sahajānand and that some disciple of Dayārām has inserted the latter's name in it. It is hardly possible to vouchsafe the authenticity of this view in the absence of any clear evidence.

37

Authentic information about Dayārām's daily routine is available. He used to get up at about five in the

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morning; he took an early bath and was engaged in worship for about four hours. He would not like to be interrupted during this time. At about eleven Dayārām would start cooking and at noon he and Ratanbāī took their meals. (Dayārām used to take only one meal during the day). In the afternoon, having taken some rest, he started his work of writing and no one was allowed to disturb him at that time. In the evening some people gathered around him. There was occasionally a little conversation on some issue in philosophy and religion, but most often the poet himself or his disciples sang his compositions to the accompaniment of musical instruments. Sometimes while singing Dayārām was so overcome with the emotions of Bhakti that tears rolled down his cheeks.

38

Dayārām's hand-writing was neat and shapely and he was an excellent orthographer, as is evident from the extant manuscripts written or copied down by him. First copies of many of his works were, presumably, prepared by himself. But he had developed an alternative method of writing, especially for the composition of his lyrics. He kept by his seat a wooden board coloured with chalk and sprinkled with Gulāl (slightly fragrant reddish powder). There were always one or two Vataṛaṇās (wooden pens or small thin sticks for writing on the board) nearby. Whenever he was in a creative mood he spoke the words aloud and a person sitting by his side wrote down his words on that board; Dayārām heard the writing once or twice, and corrected, amended and revised the same. Then finally he asked that it be written down on paper. Even before dictating anything he used to murmur, as if thinking

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somewhat aloud or conversing with himself and his lips would be quivering, as if measuring the power and propriety of words in the poem under composition.

39

Dayārām was not keeping well after his 65th year. He was near-blind for the last two years of his life and Ratanbāī had to lead him by hand. As long as he could, he observed the daily routine of morning worship, but had ultimately to give in and then remained content with listening to his lyrics being recited and sung by his disciples. He suffered from hernia, fistula and hydrocele and though writhing in pain and entirely disabled, consoled himself by composing devotional poetry. Ghelābhāī Amin and Vasantarām, two of his devoted disciples, and Ratanbāī lovingly nursed him during his last serious illness which lasted for about a fortnight. Dayārām was asked by Raṅchhoḍbhāī to permit him to worship his Pādukās (wooden sandals) after him, but the latter flatly refused as it would amount to founding a new creed. Dayārām said, "Who am I? You should never talk of it again". He gave detailed instructions about the performance of his funeral rites and expired on Monday, the 31st January, 1853 (5th day of the dark half of the month of Māgha of the year 1909 of the Vikrama era).

40

A few years before the death of Dayārām the modern age may be said to have dawned in Western India and especially in Gujarat. In 1840, Thirteen years before his death, the reformist Durgārām Mehtājī, a zealous school-teacher, founded the Mānava Dhārma Sabhā ("forum for humanistic religion") at Surat. In 1848 the Gujarat Vernacular Society (later known as

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Gujarat Vidyā Sabhā) which did pioneering work for the spread of literature and learning in Gujarat was established at Ahmedabad by Alexander Kinlock Forbes, the first historian of Gujarat who published two volumes of his English chronicle, *Rāsamālā*, from London in 1856. In 1851 the poet Narmadāśaṅkar, a pioneer in various fields in modern Gujarati language and literature (a monograph on whose life and works written by Gulabdas Broker has been published by the Sahitya Akademi in 1977) read his first prose-writing in the form of a paper on “the benefit of forming societies” under the auspices of the Buddhivardhak Sabhā at Bombay. Within four years of the death of Dayārām, in 1857, the University of Bombay was established and English education which was one of the principal forces responsible for the emergence of Modern Indian Literature began to take roots in this part of the country. In the place of literary, religious and social forces, which nurtured the genius of Dayārām, new forces were emerging. A new age had already dawned out of contact with the West, when Dayārām, a great representative of the Older Gujarat, died.

\* \* \*

41

In 1977, all Gujarat and the Gujarati-speaking people all over India celebrated the bi-centenary of Dayārām in appreciation of his signal service and remarkable contribution to literature. Here it is proposed to make a brief survey and present a review of his works.

42

Dayārām is the most sectarian of all mediaeval Gujarati poets who have sung poems of Bhakti. Narasimha Mehtā did not belong to any sect. He was deeply in-

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fluenced by the Bhakti movement and Vedāntic thought and expressed his emotions and philosophy in poetry animating it with the wonderful touch of his genius. The life of Mīrā, too, does not conform to any established religious sect. In fact, Narasimha and Mīrā alike were harassed and persecuted more by the orthodox followers of the established religion. The saint-poets did not belong to any sect in the conventional sense of the term. The same thing can be said about lesser luminaries in Gujarati literature—saint-poets like Rāje, Prītam, Bhojo, Nirānt, Dhiro, etc. Dayaram, on the contrary, is more wedded to the dogma in the sense of a doctrinaire commitment to the tenets of his religious creed. He is a resolute follower and consummate scholar of the Puṣṭimārga. His name by birth was Dayāśaṅkar and some people believe that he had changed it to Dayārām to remove the mention of Śaṅkara or God Siva in the latter half of his name, in conformity with his adoption of Ananyāśraya. However, one is not sure how much authenticity one should attach to this speculation, as in, at least, a few of his compositions the poet has mentioned his name as Dayāśaṅkar. The legal name was, of course, Dayāśaṅkar, because he has executed his will and testament under that name. However, the fact remains that the bulk of Dayārām's works is devoted to the exposition of the Suddhādvaita dogma or to topics pertaining to some belief or practice of the sect of Vallabhācārya.

43

Dayārām was a prolific writer. Dr. Subhash M. Dave, a keen student of Dayārām, has made a catalogue of 147 works of Dayaram, and it can hardly be claimed that the list is exhaustive. The works can be broadly

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classified into four categories- (i) religious and/or philosophical works containing doctrines of the Puṣṭimārga and allied topics, (ii) Ākhyānas or narrative poems depicting themes from the Purāṇas or describing some episode from the lives of the famous Bhaktas or devotees, (iii) scholarly works like *Satasaiyā* and *Vastuvṇdadīpikā*, and (iv) Garabis or lyrical poems describing the love of Kṛṣṇa and Gopīs in addition to some didactic hymns or songs also in the lyrical strain. Before making a survey of the principal works of Dayārām it would be appropriate to have a concise description of the Śuddhādvaita system to enable the reader to grasp the purport of Dayārām's philosophical works better.

### 44

The school of Vedānta as propounded by Vallabhācārya is known as Śuddhādvaita ("pure Advaita or non-dualism") to mark it off from the school of Śaṅkarācārya which is known as Kevalādvaita ("absolute non-dualism"). Śaṅkara explains the world of apparent plurality by invoking the principle of *Māyā*, which conceals or covers the real nature of Brahman (all-pervading soul and spirit of the universe) and presents a show of the world of souls and things. According to Śaṅkara, the Ātman (soul) in the plural is not real; it is ultimately a part of the universal soul. While Vallabha asserts the identity between individual souls and Brahman without the principle of *Māyā* and he does not consider the world *Mithyā* or illusory as stated by Śaṅkara. Saṁsāra or mundane existence conceived or imagined by the soul on account of Ahantā or egoism and Mamatā or selfishness is unreal. The world is a form of the appearance of God. It is as real as God, but it embraces neither qualitatively nor quantitatively



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the total fulness of the divine reality, because God does not transform himself to the world in totality, but always remains elevated above it. Samsāra will be lifted during redemption, because it is the consequence of ignorance about the relation of God to the World. Non-dualism or Monism as preached by Vallabha is called Śuddha or pure, because it does away with the theory of *Māyā* which is considered to corrupt the Monism to a certain extent.

45

According to Vallabha, God is both *causa materialis* (Upādāna Kāraṇa) and *causa efficiens* (Nimitta Kāraṇa) of the world. Manifestation (Āvirbhāva) and concealment or veiling (Tirobhāva) are the two powers through which God lets the whole of the Universe begin, continue and perish in its multiformity. God himself is the Existence, Spirit and Joy (Saccidānanda). God transforms himself into the world not out of any need or necessity, but without any cause, for mere play (Līlā). The world is, thus, a self-creation (Ātmasṛṣṭi) of God, which has no purpose, because God is without desires (Āptakāma).

46

The individual souls (*Jīva*) are active spiritual entities that have proceeded from God, their attribute of Ānanda or joy having been eclipsed. The soul which is of the size of an atom fills the whole body. Every soul is a part or *Aṃśa* of God, and not a reflex or Pratibimba, as the followers of Saṅkara assert. Though the soul is a part of God and has emanated from God, it is not of the same nature as God, because it misses the attribute of joy, as stated above. For the

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individual soul, God is also Antaryāmin who 'pervades him internally' and regulates all the functions of his life. God or Universal Soul has been viewed by Vallabha under different aspects and associated with different concepts. The concept of Puruṣottama is the highest of these. And this is not the Nirguṇa Brahman (or the Universal Soul without any attributes) taught by Śaṅkara; the Supreme Reality, according to Vallabha is the most perfect person and is all sweetness (*Rasa*) incarnate. He is omniscient and omnipresent. He is no other than Lord Kṛṣṇa. It is the duty of the souls to love God like a devoted wife or beloved. Their attachment is *Prema* or love, and not *Kāma* or lust. Vallabha regards the love of Gopīs or young cowherdesses of Gokula for Kṛṣṇa as the highest type of devotion. God is the highest lover and all human beings are his brides. Uddhava, who was sent to Gokula by Kṛṣṇa to console and edify the Gopīs on the former's departure to Mathurā found in them an object-lesson in pure selfless devotion.

47

The path of Vallabha is popularly known as the Puṣṭi-mārga. The Sanskrit word Puṣṭi literally means thriving, nourishment, growth, rearing and so on. But here Pustī means 'grace' or gift of God without which Bhakti cannot thrive. The saying goes *Poṣaṇam tadanu-grahaḥ*, i.e., 'Poṣaṇa or Pustī is His favour'. Thus it is a path of "spiritual nourishment". The souls who partake of the Puṣṭi are created by Kṛṣṇa by way of divine favour for his service.

48

Vallabha considered it to be his mission to guide his followers on to "the path of *favour*". He devised a

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sacrament called Brahma-Sambandha ("Kinship to the Supreme Being"). Every follower of the sect, usually when he or she is a child, is taken to a religious pontif who is a descendent of Vallabha and given a Śaraṅamantropadeśa ('initiation to the mantra or sacred formula declaring oneself to be a dependent or servant of Kṛṣṇa'). This formula is *Śrīkṛṣṇaḥ Śaraṅam mama* ('Śrī-kṛṣṇa is my protector') and is popularly known as Aṣṭākṣaramantra ('a mantra of eight letters') as it contains eight letters of Sanskrit in the Devanāgarī and allied scripts. The pontif whispers the formula in the child's ears and puts a tulsi garland round his or her neck. Dayārām, when he was only four years old, was thus initiated into the creed by one Devakīnandan Mahārāj.

49

This summary of the tenets of the Puṣṭimārga was necessary in order to help understand and place in proper perspective the religio-philosophical works of Dayārām which constitute the bulk of his writings. Rasikavallabha (1838) is his most important work in this category; it is a voluminous compendium in verse expounding the doctrines of the Śuddhādvaita or Puṣṭimārga, refuting the philosophical school of Śaṅkarācārya, wherever possible. The Sanskrit word *Rasika* generally means 'a man of taste'. But in the philosophy and literature of the Puṣṭimārga this word has a peculiar connotation. *Rasika* is, no doubt, a man of taste, but he is also one who always sings the merits of Kṛṣṇa and is unflinching in his service to Him—the resolute devotee who is devoid of lust. Vallabhācārya himself has given this definition in one of his Sanskrit couplets—

*Guṇānuwādanirataḥ Sevāyām ca Pratiṣṭhitāḥ |*  
*Saktāḥ tetrāvagantavyāḥ rasikāḥ Kāmarjitāḥ ||*

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So the title Rasikavallabha means a compendium "dear to the Rasikas".

50

It is remarkable that an autograph copy of the Rasikavallabha in the poet's hand is still preserved and greatly cherished. The composition is in the form of a dialogue in verse between a pupil and a teacher and contains 109 Padas, which term may be conveniently translated here as "verse-paragraphs". In the very beginning, Dayārām has stated his aim—the advocacy and establishment of the Puṣṭimārga—in very frank and forthright terms, and the teacher assures his pupil that he will remove all the latter's doubts. This book is, hence, of the nature of a dissertation and the author figures rather in the role of an advocate than in that of the poet. However, it is a lucid and systematic exposition and Dayārām deserves all the credit for presenting a somewhat abstruse subject with logical precision in measured Gujarati verse. After describing his pilgrimages the pupil (vide para 11) asks the teacher, "Who is God?" The teacher replies, "The highest God is Kṛṣṇa," advancing various arguments in support of his statement, and then proceeds to describe the beautiful form of Kṛṣṇa which is the acme of sweetness (Padas 11-18). He explains the nature of Bhakti or devotion to Kṛṣṇa, details the steps or stages through which to attain it and censures one's faith in any other deity (Padas 19-27). Then on being questioned by the pupil, the teacher refutes at length, albeit with a fanatical zeal, the Māyāvāda of Śaṅkara and tries to establish the superiority of the joy of Bhakti over the philosophical wrangling of Śaṅkara's Vedantic monism. *Mukti*, emancipation or the state of final beatitude is

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drab and dull existence; the people who have enjoyed the sweetness of Bhakti to a personal God would never relish it (Padas 28-47). *Anugraha* or favour of God is one's great good fortune and Bhakti is superior to Karma or action and Jñāna or knowledge. A Bhakta of the so-called untouchable caste is superior to a so-called Brahman devoid of Bhakti. He is a real Brahman who is devoted to Kṛṣṇa (Padas 48-52). Again, the author attacks the Māyāvāda and states that *Mukti* or final beatitude or liberation is not superior to the joy of Bhakti. On the contrary, *Mukti* is like *Ḍhokaḷu* (a light dish offered to a ghost) and the devotees who have tasted the sweetmeats of Bhakti can never be pleased by it. The author also compares Bhakti and Jñāna, sings the glory of Bhakti and adds that the study of the Vedas is worthless if it is done without Bhakti (Padas 53-57).

51

Then the teacher goes on to describe nine types of Bhakti. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa, a religious Sanskrit text respected by all the Vaiṣṇavas, mentions these and Dayārām reproduces the text almost verbatim. They are as follows—(1) Śravaṇa or listening to Lord's praise, (2) Kīrtana or singing His glory, (3) Smaraṇa or contemplation of Hīm, (4) Pādasevana or falling at His feet, (5) Arcana or Worshipping, (6) Vandana or Saluting, (7) Dāsatva or serving Hīm like a servant, (8) Sakhya or acting like a friend, and (9) Ātmanivedana or self-dedication. These stages are in an ascending order and the culmination or climax is the Premalakṣaṇā Bhakti or devotion characterized by intense love of God, which secures union with God. Then Dayārām describes at length the benefits to be

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derived from the nine types of Bhakti and asserts the supremacy of the tenth type, viz., love, for which no qualification is required except attachment to God. He adds that all the qualifications like learning, knowledge, philanthropy, bravery, truthfulness, wisdom, strength etc. are of little avail if there is no loving devotion to the Lord of Vraja or Kṛṣṇa (Padas 48-69). Then Dayārām describes the characteristics of an intensely devoted Bhakta and a benevolent Vaiṣṇava doing good to others; he also narrates the benefits one reaps through the company of saints and the demerits that accrue from the company of wicked people. Wealth is useless unless it is spent in the service of God or utilized for the benefit of others (Padas 70-76). Dayārām describes in a poetic manner Ādivṛndāvana or Goloka which is the permanent abode of Kṛṣṇa, praises Vallabhācārya, the founder of the Puṣṭimārga, and his son Viṭṭhalanātha and stresses the importance of Brahma-sambandha (vide para 48) for all people (Padas 77-86). He states emphatically that Kṛṣṇa and his beloved Rādhā (who is also known as Swāminī in the Puṣṭimārga) are one, like fire and flame, moon and moonlight, ocean and waves. The poet describes the purity and splendour of the river Yamunā, which has a place of eminence in the creed of the Puṣṭimārga, because Kṛṣṇa in his childhood played on its bank and took his daily bath in its waters. He also stresses the importance of Tulsi plant which is called Viṣṇupriyā ('beloved of Viṣṇu'); a garland made of the Tulsi wood is a must for the followers of the Puṣṭimārga. He describes the necessary paraphernalia for the worship of Kṛṣṇa and emphasizes his omniscience and omnipotence. It is the bounden duty of the individual soul to surrender oneself to the will of God and then not to worry about anything.

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One should worship God with the full intensity of mind and body and sing his glory; nor should one be inclined to look for the so-called faults of the saints. The fault-finding attitude is the greatest fault on the part of a devotee. The pupil is fully satisfied with the replies and explanations given by the teacher and all his doubts are completely removed (Padas 87-108). The last and concluding Pada (109) mentions the date of composition and gives some information about the author himself.

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One could hardly expect poetic merit in this type of composition. But like a Paṇḍita or a scholar or a preacher attached to his sect, Dayārām has discussed in the Rasikavallabha different aspects of religious, philosophical and ethical questions arising in the minds of the lay followers, offering solutions to remove their doubts on these questions. The Rasikavallabha is a metrical text-book or a sort of *vade-mecum* of the Śuddhādvaita dogma, and as such aims chiefly at accuracy and faithfulness to doctrine. Dayārām has complete mastery over the subject, his language is clear and lucid and he has employed philosophical terminology with perfect ease and exactness. He has presented logical wranglings and arguments of rival schools with commendable clarity and there is hardly a line in the whole book which is equivocal, vague or obscure. Dayārām is one of the undisputed masters of Gujarati language and versification and he has been able to present his subject with perspicuity and clarify with occasional flashes of poetry. Rasikavallabha is, so far, the best monograph in Gujarati on the Śuddhādvaita dogma, more readable because it is in easy and lucid verse.

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Dayārām has composed a number of smaller works on different allied topics in Gujarati and Brajabhāṣā. We may take here a bird's eye view of a few of them that are noteworthy from the viewpoint of the Śuddhādvaita dogma and at the same time express Dayārām's approach to life which is influenced by it.

54

Puṣṭipatharahasya ('the secret of the Puṣṭimārga') is a poem in 183 stanzas composed in the Duhā and Rasāvalī metres. As stated earlier, the Puṣṭimārga is "the path of God's favour". Dayārām explains the significance of the Path and elucidates it with illustrations to show as to how one should dedicate oneself to Vallabhācārya and his son Viṭṭhalanātha, popularly known as Gosāñjī. The Bhaktipoṣaṇa ('Furtherance or promotion of Bhakti') contains 101 stanzas and is in the Candrāvalā metre throughout. It is a small treatise on Bhakti and expounds its science or art, so to say, in all its aspects, and is composed in the Braj. Puṣṭīpatha-sārmaṇḍāma ('a garland of gems of the essence of the Puṣṭimārga') is also in Braj and deals in a popular way with various topics pertaining to the system. As expounded by Vallabhācārya in the Navaratna and other works, *Cintā* or worry is an obstacle in the path of devotion to God; one who has dedicated himself to God does never worry, because his life is that of complete surrender. Dayārām was one of such dedicated souls and he has pithily expressed his philosophy in one of his popular Padas (vide para 28). *Cintācūrṇikā* ('pulverization or crushing of worry') is a poem in 61 stanzas giving the same instruction or advice and citing various instances for illustration, by the



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way, from mythology and history. Kleśakuṭhāra ('axe to destroy pain', that is, pain of worldly affliction) also treats of a similar subject. In the composition of such works of comparatively smaller scope Dayārām is deeply influenced by the Ṣoḍaśa Granthas ('sixteen books') written in Sanskrit by Vallabhācārya. Contrary to the connotation of the term Grantha in the title, these sixteen 'books' are very brief in extent; the shortest of them, Catuṣślokī ('four ślokas'), contains only four verses as explicitly mentioned in its title and the longest contains twentyfive verses. The extent of all the sixteen 'books' taken together is only 219 verses! All of them were composed by Vallabhācārya at the specific request of different lay followers at different places during his itinerary that took him to various parts of India. These 'books' are meant for those of his followers who could not grasp or comprehend the learned commentaries or Bhāṣyas or interpretations written by the Ācārya. As such, the 'sixteen books' have a pride of place in the entire literature of the Puṣṭimārga, since they contain, in a nutshell, the complete teaching of the sect and in a form readily accessible to the common man. Hence they are extremely popular among Puṣṭimārga adherents and are extensively translated and commented upon in various Indian languages. It is but natural that Dayārām should have been deeply influenced by these 'books'; and many of his works—especially his compositions dealing with some philosophical, metaphysical or theological point of the sect—bear unmistakable marks of that influence.

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The Rasikarañjana ('delight of the Rasikas') would remind the reader of Dāyārām's principal philosophical

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work in Gujarati, viz., Rasikavallabha (vide para 49-52). The Rasikarañjana is a shorter work in Braj composed in various metres and expounds in some detail the tenets of the Śuddhādvaita. The Siddhāntasāra ('essence of the canon') and Bhaktividhana ('establishment of Bhakti') are also similar versified works in Braj. Śrī-kṛṣṇanāmamahātmyamañjarī (Gujarati), Śrīkṛṣṇastāvanacandrikā (Braj) and Nāmaprabhāvabatrīsī (Braj) extol the nāmasmarṇa or chanting of the name of God (here Kṛṣṇa); the title of the last-named work ends with the word Batrīsī, which suggests that it contains 32 verses (Gujarati *Batrīs*, Hindi *Battīs* 32). The chanting of the name of Kṛṣṇa or of the Aṣṭāka-saramantra (vide para 48) commands enormous sanctity among the followers of the Puṣṭimārga. And one is reminded of Kṛṣṇā's own reference to it in the Gītā while the Lord mentions his Vibhūtiḥ or special manifestations or powers, viz., *yajñānām, japayajnosmi* ('I am japayajna or sacrifice in the form of the chanting of God's name among all the sacrifices', Gītā, 10-25C). Bhaktavela (Gujarati), Vaiṣṇavanuḥ Dhoḷ (Gujarati) and Puṣṭibhaktarūpamālikā (Braj) describe the life of famous Bhaktas among the followers of the Puṣṭimārga. *Corāsī* means 'eightyfour' in Gujarati and Braj and *Dhoḷ* is 'song' (to be sung especially by women) in Gujarati. 'Eightyfour Vaiṣṇavas' are most revered and celebrated Bhaktas in the Puṣṭimārga; they are perfectly historical figures and their vārtās or life-accounts are extremely popular among the followers of the sect.

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Prabodhabāvanī ('fiftytwo verses on enlightenment') contains 52 exquisite didactic verses in the Kuṇḍaliā metre. The homily or sermonizing is, naturally, centred

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round the teaching of the Puṣṭimarga, but a remarkable feature of this composition is the curious device of versification whereby every stanza begins and ends with an identical proverb and the intervening five lines (Kuṇḍaliā being a metre of seven lines) give some advice or instruction usually in a humorous or satirical vein. In this, Dayārām has continued the tradition of a peculiar type of literary compositions prevalent in his part of the country. Sanskrit and Prākṛit literature written in Gujarat and Rajasthan is replete with Vernacular proverbs in Sanskrit or Prākṛit garb and one can make a veritable anthology of such proverbs from the Aprabhraṃśa literature. In Gujarati literature we see this trend in Māṇḍana Bandhāro (c. 2nd half of the 15th century), an artisan typing clothes which are to be variously coloured, who is well-known as the author of the Prabodhabatrīsī ('thirtytwo chapters on enlightenment'), a collection of didactic verses divided into 32 parts according to subjects. Śrīdhara, a junior contemporary of Māṇḍana, who composed the Rāvaṇa-Mandodarī Saṃvād ('dialogue between Rāvaṇa and Mandodarī' on the question of returning Sītā to Rāma) in 1509 is saturated with proverbs. The philosopher-poet Akho (he was a follower of the Kevalādvaita philosophy of Śaṅkarācārya) who lived more than a century after Māṇḍana preaches Vedānta in his Chappa, lashes out at the social evils and religious hypocrisy of his times and employs scores of proverbs for the purpose. In this respect he is indebted to Māṇḍana from whom he derived the form of proverb-studded satire, and one can cite many a parallel passage from the two poets. Thus in the composition of Prabodhabāvanī, Dayārām stands on the terra firma of earlier poetic tradition and shows his originality in pro-

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ducing a highly readable piece. Verse 4 of the Prabodhabāvanī begins and ends with a proverb — *Pārasa-manine vāṭake bhaṭajī māge bhikk* (“the learned Brahmin is asking alms in a bowl made of the philosopher’s stone”). The story goes that once a *tahelio* or a Brahmin begging money or materials in the early morning was going from house to house singing highly philosophical Padas. Dayārām who observed this was highly touched by the irony of the situation and immediately composed the verse in question.

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Brāhmaṇabhakta Vivāda Nāṭaka is a dialogue or verbal contest in 70 stanzas, in the Duṣaiyā metre, between two Brahmins—Viṣṇudatta and Śivaśankara. The names of the contestants suggest that they were devotees, respectively, of Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) and Śiva, and as a result of the contest the poet comes to a mutually agreed conclusion that a member of the so-called untouchable class who is a Bhakta is always superior to a so-called Brahmin averse to Bhakti. The Hanumān Garuḍa Saṃvād is a heated dialogue between Hanumān, the devoted servant of Rāma, and Garuḍa or divine eagle on whom Viṣṇu (Kṛṣṇa) rides. The place of contest is the outskirts of Dwārkā, the capital of Kṛṣṇa. The dialogue turns out to be a heated one, full of humour and, at times highly satirical recriminations, but both realise at the end that the Divinity in Rāma and Kṛṣṇa is identical. Dayārām has also written the Mana Mati Saṃvād Nāṭaka. It is a dialogue between *Mana* or mind and *Mati* or intellect. Mind is fickle by nature and has wandering habits. The intellect persuades, cajoles and coaxes the mind to concentrate itself on God, so that it can attain eventual beatitude. Such

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versified dialogues are called Nāṭaka ('play') by Dayārām; but they are not Nāṭaka or Nāṭikā in the Sanskrit sense which is "play or drama" with an implication of staging. That's also what the term signifies in most of the modern Indian languages including Gujarati. But in mediaeval Gujarati and Hindi literature Nāṭaka or Nāṭikā connotes a composition containing heated dialogue or verbal dispute on some point of mythological, philosophical or didactic interest. There are allegorical works in this form, where the characters are symbols of different qualities and it becomes easier for the popular mind to catch up the main idea of the composition, though there is every possibility of the work becoming dull and mechanical from the literary point of view. The Candrasena Candrodyota Nāṭikā by Dayāśīla (16th century) in Gujarati and Samayasāra Nāṭaka of Banārasīdās (17th century) in Hindi are apt illustrations of the earlier Nāṭaka form attempted by Dayārām. Banārasīdās was a Jaina philosopher staying at Agra; he was a house-holder devoted to philosophical and religious studies. Some of his views were considered to be heterodox by the leaders of the Jaina Church and Meghavijaya Upādhyāya of Gujarat, one of his contemporaries, a Jaina monk and an eminent scholar in his own right, composed the Yuktīprabodha Nāṭaka in Prākṛit, with a Sanskrit commentary, to refute the views of Banārasīdās. All this by way of corroborative evidence to see in what sense the word *Nāṭakā* or *Nāṭikā* was used in mediaeval Gujarati and Hindi literature. In old Gujarati the word *Nāṭaka* or *Nāṭikā* is also used in the sense of 'dance', 'rope-dance', 'dance accompanied by acrobatics' etc., and all these historical connotations must have contributed to the evolution of a particular literary form, which is not a play or

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Nāṭaka in the Classical Sanskrit sense and the sense in which it is used in subsequent regional literatures.

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Dayārām has written a number of Ākhyānas, as stated earlier (vide para 43). Ākhyāna is a narrative form, describing the story or legend of some great character as distinct from lyrics (purely devotional and partly erotic, which are generally known as Padas). The literary form very similar to Ākhyāna is known by the same name in Old Marathi and is called Maṅgala in Old Bengali. There is a voluminous Ākhyāna-literature in Gujarati and it was extremely popular among all classes of people. The poet Bhalāna (15th century), who hailed from Pāṭan, the capital of Gujarat for more than six centuries, is a remarkable Ākhyāna-writer who is chronologically the first. Premānand (circa 1634-1700), who was a native of Baroda and had also been a resident of Surat and Nandurbar in Khandesh for some time, was not only an Ākhyāna-writer, but also a reciter of his own works in public and attained great popularity in both capacities. He is a great name in Gujarati literature and reached the climax of the Ākhyāna-form which none before or after him has attained. The Ākhyānas of Dayārām have to be viewed in the context of the works of his great predecessors.

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Dayārām has written a number of Ākhyānas, the themes of which are taken from the Bhāgavata Purāṇa. (As stated earlier the Bhāgavata and also the Gītā are two highly respected original works from which the Bhakti-cult has always derived inspiration and standing. Dayārām has given the gist of the Bhāgavata in 131 Padas in Gujarati and has written the Bhāgavatānukrama-

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nikā, i.e., 'Contents of the Bhāgavata' in Braj in 1823. He has composed in the same year in Gujarati a long versified work in 18 chapters, the Bhāgavadgītāmāhātmya, i.e., 'the greatness and power of the Bhagavadgītā', conforming to the pattern of the 18 chapters in the original text.) Among such Ākhyānas may be mentioned the Rukmiṇīvivāha, describing the marriage of Kṛṣṇa with Rukmiṇī, his first and principal wife; the Rukmiṇīsīmanta, narrating the traditional ceremony and celebrations at the time of Sīmanta or the first pregnancy of Rukmiṇī; the Satyabhāmāvivāha and Nāgnajitīvivāha are two Ākhyānas relating the marriage of Kṛṣṇa, respectively, with Satyabhāmā and Nāgnajitī.

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The theme of the Ajāmīlākhyāna ('the story of Ajāmila') is quite different, though based on the Bhāgavata. Ajāmila was a Brahmin who led a most vicious and depraved life and had a son, named Nārāyaṇa, born of a slave-girl. (It may be mentioned, incidentally, that Nārāyaṇa is also a synonym of Lord Viṣṇu.) Ajāmila was very fond of the son and when on death-bed he uttered the name of Nārāyaṇa it was out of anxiety for the boy. But, in fact, he took the name of the all-pervading God, an act which removes all sins. The messengers of Yama or the fierce God of death who had come to take Ajāmila to hell were immediately overpowered and countermanded by the messengers of Nārāyaṇa who were instantly attracted by the utterance of the name of the Lord which saved the dying man. Ajāmila was surprised and overwhelmed. He repented, went to Haradvār, a place of pilgrimage on the banks of the Gaṅgā, did penances and died the death of a pious man. The story of Ajāmila is related among the Vaiṣṇavas as an example of the efficacy of

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Nāmasankīrtana or chanting of the name of God. It is but natural that Dayārām, as a staunch Vaiṣṇava, has selected the story of Ajāmila for one of his Akhyānas. Vṛtrāsuraṅkhyāna is also an Akhyāna which takes its theme from the Bhāgavata. Vṛtrāsura was a very powerful demon whom Indra, the king of gods, could never defeat. The gods went to Lord Viṣṇu, praised him and sought his help. The Lord advised them to approach the sage Dadhīci and prepare a Vajra or thunderbolt or powerful weapon from the sage's bones. The gods went to the hermitage of Dadhīci and related their inability to defeat the demon and consequent calamities to the world. The sage accepted the request of the gods, his soul became one with the Lord and it left his mundane body. Viśvakarman, the divine architect, made Vajra out of the bones of the sage; Indra rode his elephant, Airāvata, with the Vajra in hand and killed the demon on the battle-field.

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Akhyānas have also been written on the lives of Saints since the inception of the form and Dayārām, too, followed this tradition. His Mīrācaritra ('life of Mīrā') is, factually, an Ākhyāna, though written rather in a lyrical strain. It was composed in 1807 at the suggestion of Icchārām Bhaṭṭajī, the preceptor of Dayārām (vide para 9) and narrates with feeling and fervour the life of the eminent poetess and great Bhakta, Mīrā (1499-1547) who belonged to the Royal family of Mewad. Kuṅvarabāinun Māmerun describes a well-known episode from the life of Narasiṃha Mehtā, in which Kṛṣṇa is believed to have helped him in the performance of some social ceremonies, popularly called Māmerun in Gujarat, on the occasion of the first pregnancy of his daughter Kuṅverbāi. Dayārām's great



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predecessor Premānand had composed an Ākhyāna based on mythology, viz., Okhāraṇa ('Carrying off Okhā') in 29 Kaḍavāṇ or verse-paragraphs and it describes the marriage of Aniruddha, Kṛṣṇa's grandson, with Okhā (skt. Usā), the daughter of Bāṇāsura, a powerful Asura ruler, after a fierce fight between the two sides. It is one of the best Ākhyānas of Premānand. Dāyarām expanded the original Akhyana by adding popular marriage-songs and other materials and it came to be extended upto 89 Kaḍavāṇ. It may be noted, incidentally, that the Gujarati word *Kaḍavūṇ* (pl. *Kaḍavāṇ*) for a part or portion of the Ākhyāna is from an Apabhraṃśa word meaning "a group or cluster" (of verses), but in modern Gujarati the word *Kaḍavūṇ* (derived from Skt. *Kaṭu*) also means 'bitter or unpalatable'. Dayārām did not like to employ the word *Kaḍavūṇ* for a part of his Ākhyāna as neither he nor his contemporaries knew the etymology of the word in question. How can a bitter or unpalatable word denote any part of a work composed to praise God? So Dayārām and one of his predecessors, Gopāldās (who has composed the Vallabhākhyāna narrating the life of Vallabhācārya) have called the verse-paragraph in their Ākhyānas *Mīṭhūṇ* ('sweet', pl. *Mīṭhāṇ*) !

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But Dayārām's genius is, primarily, lyrical and, on the whole, he has not been successful in the form of narrative Ākhyāna; hardly any of his Ākhyānas enjoys a high place in Mediaeval Gujarati literature, though they are held in esteem by the followers of the Puṣṭimārga.

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Though Dayārām's achievement is but mediocre in the narrative form like Ākhyāna, he made a mark where

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narration is blended with lyricism as in delineating various pastimes, fun and frolic of Kṛṣṇa and Gopīs, and also where he has to employ playful wit. A short poem, viz., *Locan Manano jhagaḍo* ('dissension or dispute between the eye and the mind') is a fine example of fancy and wit. The Gopī's pangs of separation are very cleverly brought out in this poem. The main issue is this: "whose love of Kṛṣṇa is the foremost?" The mind tells the eye: "you saw Kṛṣṇa and became happy, but I was captivated and was, as if, put on fire, I am lame and you are my vehicle. But you see Kṛṣṇa everyday and I experience the pangs of separation". But the eye has its own grievance; the mind has betrayed the eye: "I have introduced you (mind) to Kṛṣṇa and now you have monopolized him. The whole world knows my pain, and I shed tears day and night." The mind retorts: "I am burning inside from fire of separation; smoke is produced by fire and that makes you weep". Then both eye and mind came to *Buddhi* ('intellect') for an impartial verdict. *Buddhi* gave the following verdict: "O mind! you are soul of the eye; and O eye! you are, so to say, body of the mind. The love of Kṛṣṇa is the result of your mutual accord or alliance". *Locan Manano jhagaḍo* is, in fact, a dialogue or verbal contest and it can be conveniently included in the class of so-called *Nāṭaka* or *Nāṭikā* dealt with earlier (vide para 57).

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Now a brief reference may be made to *Dayārām's* works in which narration or description is blended with lyricism. *Premarasagītā* ('Gītā of the sentiment of love') is the most noteworthy among such works. It describes the episode of *Uddhava* going to *Gokula* as *Kṛṣṇa's*

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emissary to console Gopīs on the latter's departure to Mathurā (vide para 46). The episode, as originally narrated in the Bhāgavata, is generally known as Bhramaragītā (lit. 'song of the bee'). A large number of poems are composed around this theme in Braj as well as in Gujarati. About twenty poems are extant in Gujarati on this theme, under the titles Bhramaragītā, Premagītā, Sarasagītā, Bhramarapacīsī or Premapacīsī (because the contents comprise pacīs or 25 Padas), Śaraṇagītā, Rasikagītā, Prakāśagītā, Virahagīta, etc., the Bhramaragītā of Caturbhujā and Rasikagītā of Bhīma (both 16th century) being chronologically the earliest among them. Premaraśagītā of Dayārām is, chronologically the last, but perhaps poetically the best. It depicts the philosophy of love as actually lived and experienced by the Gopīs. Uddhava is told by them:

“You may go to Kāśī (holy city on the bank of the Gāṅgā) and practice Yoga, but it is useless to us; our only sheet anchor is always the beautiful dark-complexioned one. Our hearts are brimful with love; where can Yoga, the poor fellow, establish himself? He will suffer the kicks of love; will roam here and there and die disconsolate. The son of Nanda (Kṛṣṇa) is like hard cash; we see him incarnate with our own eyes. Why should we lose our time for no purpose spending it in yoga and performing sacrifices?”

And the Gopīs also add:

“We have the noose of love round our necks; it will never loosen. Though the world will deride us, it will never snap, because it is not fragile. The path of love is hardly accessible; O Uddhava! you have not seen it; so you like knowledge and feel that Yoga is sweet. Yoga is meant for those whose mind is immersed in this world; our mind is vivacious and it plays with one who is the only connoisseur of love (Kṛṣṇa) . . . Your God is immanent pervading the whole universe, but our God lives

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only in one place. You like the dim light of stars; we are pleased only with the Moon....” Having heard such words (from the Gopīs) all doubts of Uddhava were removed; his entanglement with Yoga evaporated and his mind became full with love. Casting off all pride, Uddhava fell at the feet of the Gopīs and said, “for sure it’s only you have found the lover of Dayā”.

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Some other works in this category—Bālaḷīlā, Patraḷīlā (1806), Kamaḷalīlā, Rāsālīlā, Rūpalīlā, Muralīlīlā—are collections of Padas and as the word *līlā* (‘sport’) at the end of each title suggests, they describe the sports and dalliance of Kṛṣṇa and Gopīs. Dāpaçaturī (‘cleverness in collection of the toll’) describes the pranks of Kṛṣṇa and his friends in collecting Dāpa or road-tax while the Gopīs were on their way to Mathurā to sell milk and curds. Rādhājīno Vivāhakhel (‘Rādhā’s marriage-sport’), Rādhikānaḥ Vakhāp (‘praise of Rādhā’) and Rādhikānuḥ svapna (‘dream of Rādhā’ in which she married Kṛṣṇa) are excellent Padas or cluster of Padas.

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Saḍṭviraha (‘love in separation during the six seasons’) describes the six seasons in the best tradition of Sanskrit poetry, though the Sanskrit syllabic metres employed throughout the poem are faulty and show that Dayārām’s knowledge of Sanskrit prosody was rather unreliable and amateurish (vide para 19). He probably knew his limitations and never attempted such a composition again.

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Dayārām has written two Bāramasīs (‘twelve months’) or Mahinās (‘months’). This is a form of literature cultivated in Gujarati, at least, since the 13th century.

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Bāramasī is, generally an erotic poem describing love in separation and delineating the mental and physical condition of a lover in terms of the changing seasons and natural environment, month by month. The two poems of Dayārām on this topic bring out the best of his lyrical genius. Tithio ('days') are the 15 days of the bright fortnight of the Hindu Calendar from the first to the full-moon day and a literary form describing love in separation has evolved round these Tithio on the same pattern as that round the months. Dayaram has written two poems entitled Pandar Tithio ('fifteen days').

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Mātrkā and Kakka are forms of didactic poetry which we get in a fully developed form in Old Gujarati literature as early as the 13th century. Mātrkā means the alphabet. In the Mātrkā-poems all the letters of the alphabet (including vowels) from *a* to *ha* are taken and one or more didactic verses are composed beginning with each letter. In the Kakka-poems (the vocable *Kakko* in Gujarati is derived from Kakka and means the consonants of the alphabet, beginning with *ka* and ending in *ha*.) The first verse begins with the letter *ka* and the last with *ha*. This didactic form was very popular among the masses in Gujarat and we get numerous works of this type upto the 19th century. Dayārām has also attempted this traditional form under the title Manaprabodha ('enlightenment of the mind'), a poem giving instruction, guidance and advice according to the tenets of the Puṣṭimārga. The composition is rather prosaic, but it shows at the same time what appears to have been Dayārām's intention, namely, to attempt almost all the forms of literature traditionally current during his times.

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Two voluminous works in Braj, viz., the *Satasaiyā* (1816) and *Vastuvṛndadīpikā* (1818) testify to Dayārām's vast erudition and scholarship. *Satasaiyā* ('the seven hundred') contains more than 700 verses in the *Duhā* metre and Dayārām himself has written a Gujarati gloss on every verse to enable an ordinary reader to follow the purport of the book. The tradition of preparing an anthology of seven hundred verses (the work may be a selection or compilation from contemporary and earlier poetry, or it may be from the pen of an individual author) is very old in Indian literature. *Gāthā-ṣaptaśatī* ('a collection of seven hundred gāthas') of *Sātavāhana Hāla* (circa 1st century), culled or selected from a very large number of erotic gāthās in *Prākṛit*, is the most famous and earliest instance of such a compilation. A number of Sanskrit commentaries are written on this anthology and writers of Sanskrit poetics very often give citations from it. *Aryāṣaptaśatī* in Sanskrit by *Govardhana* (12th century) is clearly an imitation of *Hāla*, but quite conspicuous in poetic merit. There are some works on a similar pattern in later Sanskrit literature. *Bihārī*, *Matirām* and *Vṛndāvan* or *Vṛnda*, famous poets of Braj literature, have written the *Bihārīsatasaī* (1663), *Matirām Satasaī* (circa 1684) and *Vṛndasatasaī* (1705), respectively, which are their own compositions, and not selections or compilations. To speak of Gujarati literature, *Dalpatram* (1820-1898), a junior contemporary of Dayārām but a pioneer of modern Gujarati poetry who got his preliminary training at the famous school of Braj poetry and poetics at *Bhuj* in *Kaccha*, has written *Dalpat Satasaī* ('seven hundred verses by Dalpat') in Gujarati, his work being a collection of didactic verses written by himself. *Dalpat-*

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ram was an admirer of the mediaeval poet Śamaḷ (1690-1769), a popular and prolific writer of Padyavārtā or stories in verse dealing with plots and themes of a secular nature handed down through earlier literature as well as through folk-tales. Dalpatram has compiled a Śamaḷ-satsaḷ selecting seven hundred didactic aphorisms from different stories of Śamaḷ.

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Thus the Satasaiya of Dayārām is a part of the Indian literary tradition. It blends the didactic and erotic elements. In the beginning, after the obeisance to Kṛṣṇa, the poet describes different types of Nāyikās or heroines as enunciated in the poetry and poetics of Braj. He has also stressed the significance and importance of the company of saintly people, devotion, the chanting of God's name and dependence on none except Kṛṣṇa. There is a long section on Vivekaśikṣā ('instruction for good conduct') and Prastāvaprakaraṇa containing aphorisms or pithy sayings worth citing at appropriate occasions. There is a section containing Kūṭa or very difficult stanzas, and stanzas composed of words containing one or two letters only. A considerable portion of the Satasaiyā is devoted to Citrakāvyas ('pictorial poems') like Kapāṭabandha, Kamalabandha, Hārabandha, Chatrabandha, Dhanuṣabandha etc., poetic compositions whose texts could be arranged in the shape of the door, the lotus, the necklace, the umbrella, the bow, etc. It is evident that Dayārām has written Satasaiyā mainly with the object of preparing an authentic text-book on poetics as it developed in Braj, though, occasionally, he has inserted some didactic sayings, and a number of verses glorifying the Puṣṭimārga, dear to his heart. At the end of the

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Satasaiyā, Dayārām declares: "I have composed this to please the Lord of the Gopīs, Kṛṣṇa, and not for attaining the favour of any ruler". He is probably making here a satirical reference to the Braj poets like Bihārī and others. Dayārām has also written Piṅgalasāra, a text on metrics or prosody in Braj and two small works on music, viz., Rāgamālā and Tālamālā.

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Vastuvṛndadīpikā is, again, a book in Braj. It mentions or catalogues, in various metres, things or items or particulars from 1 to 108 in an ascending order. The work is, in a way, a poetic vocabulary meant for budding poets as well as persons having some ambition of scholarship. When tradition did hold considerable sway in literature and literary criticism such works had their own use in various forms of compositions—description, narration and verbal play. In fact, they are part and parcel of literature on Kaviśikṣā ('training of poets') which developed in Sanskrit and also in Braj. The tradition of describing or arranging items in an ascending order can be traced to very early times in Indian literature. The Aṅguttaranikāya, a part of the Suttapiṭaka of the Pāli Canon, is a collection of sermons in ascending numerical order, as its very name suggests. It describes three types of monks—those who have no specific desires, those who have some, and those who are free from desire altogether; the three messengers of gods—old age, disease and death; the eight kinds of alms, the eight causes of earthquake, and so on. The Sthānāṅga Sūtra and Samavāyāṅga Sūtra, respectively, the third and fourth Aṅga of the Jaina Canon in Ardha-māgadhī, are also comparable in this respect. In the Sthānāṅga Sūtra, various



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themes of religion are dealt with in numerical order from one to ten. The Samavāyāṅga Sūtra is, in a way, a continuation of the Sthānāṅga Sūtra, the subject-matter of two-thirds of the work being arranged in numerical grouping—as in the Sthānāṅga—except that in this case the numbers do not stop at ten, but go on upto Koṭākoti ('one crore multiplied by one crore'). The point that I want to emphasise here is this : Dayārām's scholarship and literary production, though highly creditable as individual achievement, should be viewed and evaluated in the general context of the history and traditions of Indian literature.

72

Though the principal medium of Dayārām's literary expression was poetry or verse, his prose-writings are considerable in extent, and even quality. His Gujarati gloss on the Satasaiyā is expository, and it is lucid enough to be called an exhaustive and simple commentary-cum-translation of his rather terse composition in Braj. The tradition of writing gloss or Bālāvabodha ('elucidation for a *bāla* or beginner') on Sanskrit and Prakrit works is fairly old in Gujarati literature and specimens of the expository prose written as early as the 13th century are published (Prācina Gurjara Kāvyaśaṅgraha, edited by C. D. Dalal, G.O.S. No. 13, Baroda, 1920) and more material is lying unpublished in various manuscript-libraries. There is no doubt that Dayārām's gloss on the Satasaiyā is one of the best Bālāvabodhas in Old and Mediaeval Gujarati literature.

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Dayārām rendered into prose his Bhagavadgītāmāhātmya (vide para 59) at the request of some Vaiṣṇavas

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at Dabhoi. His Praśnottaramālikā ('a necklace of questions') is in the form of a dialogue between the teacher and the pupil. Here Dayārām has presented the views of the four principal Vaiṣṇava sects, viz., those of Viṣṇu-svāmin, Rāmānuja, Nimbārka and Madhya and also of the Kevalādvaita Vedānta School of Śaṅkarācārya and has tried to establish the superiority of the tenets of Vallabhācārya. Praśnottaramālā is a short work in which both the questions and answers are in one sentence only. The Hariharādītārātamyasvarūpa emphatically states that among all the gods in the Hindu pantheon, Hari or Kṛṣṇa is the highest, immanent and eternal. This work is also in the form of questions and answers. The prose-writings of Dayārām are untouched by any western influence and are a continuation of the earlier prose in Gujarati. Dayārām's prose, in this respect, deserves a close scrutiny and comparison with the Vacanāmṛta ("nectar of sermons") of his contemporary Sahajānand or Svamīnārāyaṇa (vide para 36) which is also free of any alien influence and the authentic text of which has been faithfully preserved. Such a comparison would help us recapture formal features typical of Gujarati prose before modern prose took over.

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And then, we come to the fourth and last section of Dayārām's literary productions, viz., his lyrics. Though Dayārām's works are numerous and indeed as an author, he was particularly prolific as said earlier, his great fame as a poet is based on a comparatively small segment of his corpus, that is, on his lyrics. These describe the love of Kṛṣṇa and Gopīs, and are popularly known as Garabīs, because they provided popular songs for the Garabā dance peculiar to Gujarat. Not that

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Dayārām was the first poet to attempt successfully the form of the Garabī. Bhālaṇa (15th century), Narasiṃha Mehtā (circa 1414-1480), Mīrā, Rāje (17th century), Bhāṇadās (18th century) Rāmakṛṣṇa (18th century) and others have written excellent Garabīs before Dayārām, and Dayārām has been benefited by the earlier literary tradition. (An exquisite Garabī beginning with the line, *Sāmbhala re tuṅ sajanī māṛī rajanī kyāñ ramī āvijī*—“hear, O my female friend, where did you have (amorous) play for the whole night and have now returned?”—is popularly ascribed to Dayārām, but it has been traced to the works of the earlier poet Bhālaṇa; and, again, it is not unlikely that Bhālaṇa, too, might have borrowed it from the erotic lyrics current during or before his time or from folk-literature.) But there is no doubt that Dayārām developed the form to its perfection and created a large number of superb lyrics. He invested the form with a charm and rhythm of his own. His poetic diction is perfect and his words are so arranged that sense, rhythm and tune blend in harmony to express one brief experience in a most artistic manner. A number of his Garabīs are apt illustrations of the best words in the best order or of *Pāka* or *Śayyā*, to use a significant term from Sanskrit poetics.

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Garabī, is, in fact, almost a synonym of the literary form of Pada developed in Old Gujarati literature with a slightly specialized connotation. Pada is a brief poem expressing powerful emotion but having some description or narration and, at times, some didactic element also. It was meant to be sung and the particular melody in which it is to be sung is generally indicated in the manuscripts, though one and the same Pada was, at times, played or set to different tunes,

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as is clear from references to the same Pada in different manuscripts. This was but natural as the persons who used to sing the Padas were, in some cases, good musical composers themselves. The first couplet of a Pada is called Dhruvapada or *ṭek* (the refrain), which is repeated at the end of each succeeding couplet. The name of the poet generally occurs in the last couplet. Pada is a wider term; Garabī, as characterized above, is a part of it.

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Like the poets of Sufism—Hafiz and Rumi—Dayārām, in his Garabīs, preaches the cult of love. But in Sufism, God is the female beloved or sweetheart, while in the Puṣṭimārga of which Dayārām is a great exponent in poetry, all human beings are brides of God Kṛṣṇa, the great lover, who is to be approached, pursued, cajoled or played with through nine-fold Bhakti. There is no selfishness in love and everything is to be sacrificed for the sake of the beloved or to be dedicated to him. Dayārām's Garabīs portray innumerable aspects of love which are to be depicted in terms of intimate relations between human lovers. The opening lines of many of his Garabīs are striking and attractive when we keep in mind, the purport and vivid symbolism inherent in the form. As for example, *Ūbhā raho to kahuñ Vātaḍī Bihārīlāl* ('O my darling Bihārī, I may tell you something if you wait for a while'); *Huñ Śuñ jānuñ je vahāte mujamāñ śuñ dīṭhun?* ('What my beloved finds in me I do not know.');

*Śyām rañg samīpe na jāvuñ māre āj thakī* ('from this day on, never shall I go to anything that is black in colour'); *Kāmañ dīse che alabelā tārī āñkhamāñ re* ('O charming one, there appears to be some magic in your

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eyes'); *Gheli mune kīdhī śrī Nandajīnā nande* ('the son of Nanda, i.e. Kṛṣṇa, has made me crazy'); *Premanī pīḍā te kone kahie O madhukar* ('to whom shall I narrate the pangs of love, O bee!'), etc. His famous lyric commencing with the line, *je kai prem aṁsā avatare premarasa tenā uramān ṭhare* ('love finds a permanent place in the heart of him who is born of the essence of love') explains, in a nut-shell, his philosophy of love.

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These Garabīs are a splendid yet graceful expression of Dāyārām's genius. The description of the sports of Kṛṣṇa and Gopīs, in various moods and situations, is the only theme of his superb lyrics. Gokul and Vṛndāvan are the venue of these sports. The flute of Kṛṣṇa is a living character here being envied by Gopīs as it remains on the lips of the God most of the time. Dayārām who remained unmarried all his life 'becomes' one of the Gopīs and sings about the sports, dalliance, vagaries, pranks and escapades of Kṛṣṇa without the least inhibition. At some places, the deep and anxious feeling of the Gopī is expressed; at others, her way-ward and impulsive behaviour befitting an inexperienced girl, and at some other places still her shrewd maturity as an experienced lover. Dayārām's pictorial art in poetry is noteworthy and there are hundreds of musical phrases blending sound and sense which can hardly be translated in any other language. He has sung about love in separation and love in union, and his portraits are unabashed and undisguised like those of Narasimha Mehtā. Dayārām can become wonderfully pithy and still the listener or reader can enjoy his poetry without any effort, because he has employed and sometimes bodily adopted,

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the traditional tunes of the folk-songs or borrowed from them one or two lines that serve an initiatory function and deepen our response. In this respect Dayārām can be compared with the eminent modern Gujarati poet, Nānalal. It is a very remarkable fact that Gujarati-speaking masses of those days sang those lyrics along with Dayārām himself, which speaks for his closeness to the idiom of the common people. While composing these lyrics Dayārām has taken full advantage of the qualities of the Gujarati language as it had developed upto his times; his creations, in their turn, improved and enriched the power and faculty of the language, furthered its cultivation and development. The tradition of singing Dayārām's garabīs is still kept active at Dabhoi, Chanod and surrounding region and one can appreciate his poetry much better when set to music, because originally the lyrics were meant to be sung and listened to.

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Dayārām's lyrics are distinguished primarily either by the beauty and nuances of language or by the elevated and striking expression of traditional sentiments, and often by both at once. Some specimens of literary art may be translatable, in a way, but any rendering into English would appear clumsy, even somewhat sacrilegious, to some one who knows both Gujarati and English. It is so difficult to bring into the translation of Dayārām's poetry the characteristic brilliance of the original. No translation can reproduce its charm even partially. However, one should hazard the presentation of a few literary pieces in translation.

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There is a description of undisguised physical love in one of the well-known Garabīs:-

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While returning he darted his enticing eyes at me. . . . Do come to my house, O charming one; we will enjoy ourselves at night. Tell your mother that a cow is missing and you will have to go in search of her. Construct an embankment to stop water from flowing away (keep an excuse ready for your absence from home). My own room is away from the residence of my husband's relatives and it is secluded. . . . I will keep a light burning (to guide you) and we will enjoy to our heart's content.

Catching the expression in a damsel's loving eyes:-

Just as a light shines brightly in a glass lantern, so does the light of love flash out from the eyes of the beauty.

Mischievous confession of guilt by Kṛṣṇa before a Gopī:

"I am yours, I am yours, my beloved, you may give me any names that you may like. I have not erred, but I accept my error (for your sake); give me whatever punishment you may like. Consider me an offender, and bind me with the cord of your two hands. If you want to punish me still further, aim at me both the arrows of your eyes. If you suspect that I will run away, make me a prisoner in the castle of your bosom. If you wish, I will take a vow and convince you by placing my hand on the idol of God Śiva. . . ." The Gopī was so much pleased with these words that out of affection she gave him a close embrace and carried him home with cheer. They slept on the bed with intense passion and desire and enjoyed the gratification of love. Dayo (Dayārām) is prepared to sacrifice himself for the sports of this pair.

The following dialogue evinces clever ingenuity of both Gopī and Kṛṣṇa:

"Do not touch me, O charming one, O Dandy, do not touch me. I will make you drink the nectar of my lips if you swear not to embrace me, because O prince Kṛṣṇa! You are dark-skinned, and if you touch me, I suspect, I may also become dark-

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skinned.” (Now Kṛṣṇa gives a reply:) “If by my touch you will become dark, it is equally likely that by your touch I might become fair-skinned, and on our embracing again you may get back your colour and I mine”. (He thus invites two embraces where she objected even to one.)

And the coquetry of Kṛṣṇa as viewed by a Gopī:

Do not look askance, O Dandy ! My heart is all a-flutter because of your side-long glances and my soul is pierced by your very pointed gaze. My mind is under an enchantment compelling it to look at your face, O Mohan ! From the toes to the head, you are all beauty, all taste, all charm, all sweetness. To look at you is bliss ! As the pearl-pendant in your nose-ring sways too and fro, so oscillates my heart.

An almost literal translation of one of the most popular and poetical lyrics:

What my beloved finds in me I do not know. He stares at me again and again, and finds my face sweet. When I go to fetch water, he comes after me. Unasked he helps me in putting the water-pot on my head. Even if I scold and spurn him, he does not become angry, and comes to my house and takes an opportunity to speak to me, finding some pretext. When he sees me from a distance he comes running and puts his garland round my neck. Finding me alone he touches the hem of my saree (as a token of extreme meekness), begging humbly for some favour. He comes near me wherever I go, O my sister. The lover of Dayā does not leave me alone.

Versified translation, done by a friend, of a lyric describing the superb beauty of Rādhā:

O Rādhā, your eyes are lovely brimming with  
the sentiment of love,

You are a true match of Kṛṣṇa, so do you prove,

A doe-eyed damsel can't stand comparison with you—



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Without collirium, true pleasure-giver, freedom-giver-You.  
O Handsome one! to call you moon-faced I feel shy,  
Because the moon has spots like fine wine spoiled  
by a poison-drop.

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The love of Kṛṣṇa and Gopīs or that of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā and her friends is a theme of perennial interest in Indian literature including the literature of Gujarat. The Bhāgavata Purāṇa was the great fountain-head of the Bhakti-movement which was instrumental in a rapid spread of Kṛṣṇa-worship among the classes and the masses. It is rather surprising that there is no mention of Rādhā in the Bhāgavata. But there is no doubt that the name of Rādhā was well-known several centuries back in Prākṛit literature, and presumably in folk-lore to which earlier Prakrit literature, especially secular one, is largely indebted. The Gāthāsaptasatī of Hālā (vide para 69) has a verse (I-19) describing amorous sport between Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. The Vajjālagga, a Prākṛit anthology of uncertain date, though compiled later than the Gāthāsaptasatī but having some verses contemporaneous with the Gāthāsaptasatī, or probably even earlier than that, has an entire section called *Kaṇhavajjā* ("section on Kṛṣṇa") and its 16 gāthās narrate the amours of Kṛṣṇa on one hand and Rādhā, Viśakhā and her friends on the other. There is also a clear mention of *Rāsa* or circular dance accompanied by singing. Gauḍavaho (between 700 and 725), a Prākṛit Mahākāvya by Vākpati-rāja, refers to the dalliance of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in one of its benedictory verses (v. 22). The name of Rādhā is found rather late in classical Sanskrit literature and

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the first available reference is in a benedictory verse in Bhaṭṭa Nārāyaṇa's Sanskrit play, *Veṅṛisambhāra* (10th cent.), delineating a well-known theme from the *Mahābhārata*. The Kashmiri poet Bilhaṇa (latter half of the 11th century) who had composed a Sanskrit play, *Kaṃṣasundarī*, during his sojourn in Gujarat, has described the sports of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa in the waters of the Yamunā in the beginning of his *Mahākavyā*, *Vikramāṅkadevacarita*, which he wrote under the patronage of the ruler of Kaṃṣāṭaka, where he went by sea-route after a pilgrimage to Somanāth on the West coast of Gujarat.

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Talking of early literature of Gujarat one notes that the Prākṛit grammar of Ācārya Hemacandra (12th century), which is the 8th chapter of his monumental work on Grammar, viz., *Siddhahema*, composed at the request of Siddharāja Jayasimha, the then ruler of Gujarat, quotes Apabhraṃśa verses depicting in a bold manner the love of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, presumably from the floating literature of the times. Hemacandra has also quoted two Sanskrit verses dealing with the same theme (*yāte Dvāvatiṃ tathā* and *Kanakakalaśasvacche*) in the commentary on his own treatise on poetics, viz., the *Kāvyaṇuśāsana* (The latter one of these two verses is also quoted by Bhojadeva, the famous ruler of Malwa, who flourished a few decades earlier, in his *Sarasvatīkaṇṭhābharaṇa*, also a work on Rhetorics). Jayadeva's Sanskrit poem, *Gītagovinda*, singing in the popular rhythms the erotic yet mystic love of Kṛṣṇa and Rādhā, had become fairly popular in Gujarat within less than a century after its composition in Bengal, and a stanza mentioning all the ten *Avatāras*

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or incarnations of Kṛṣṇa (*Vedān uddharate jagan nivahate* etc.) occurring at the end of the first Aṣṭapadī ('a unit of eight verses') of the Gītagovinda has been quoted in an inscription (1292) of Sārangadeva Vāghelā, the then ruler of Gujarat, found at Pāṭaṇ. A number of prose-translations of the Gītagovinda are available in Old Gujarati; a prose-translation of this classic in Old Mewāḍī language by Kumbhakarṇa or Kumbhā Rāṇā, the famous ruler of Mewāḍ, who was also a patron of learning and art, has been discovered (in addition to his Sanskrit commentary *Rasikapriyā* which has been published by the Nirnaya Sagar Press, Bombay), which incidentally shows a close similarity between Old Mewāḍī and Old Gujarati prose. It is already mentioned (vide para 27) that Dayārām had made a copy of the Gītagovinda in his own hand. A large number of Gujarati poets right from Bhālaṇa and Narasiṃha Mehtā onwards in addition to those occasionally mentioned in this treatise, are deeply influenced by the Bhakti movement and by the cult of Rādhā and Kṛṣṇa. Dayārām is an inspired and gifted representative of the galaxy of poets who sang about them. Though last in the line of mediaeval Gujarati poets, Dayārām deserves to be placed among the greatest Gujarati poets of all times, so far as his Garabīs or lyrics are concerned, and I cannot conclude this monograph better than in the words of Mr. Govardhanram M. Tripathi, author of the famous Gujarati novel *Sarasvatīcandra* and himself a very eminent critic and scholar:

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“So far as the poetical powers are concerned, he (Dayārām) is undoubtedly the greatest genius since the days

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of Premānand. His poems on Krishna and the maids of Gokul are a stream of burning lava of realistic passion and love, and if lewdness of writings, do not take away from the merits of the poet, he is a very great poet indeed. He has a weird and fascinating way of bodying forth a host of over-fondled spirits of uncontrollable will in a language which is not only at once popular and poetical, but drags society after him to adopt, as popular, the language he creates for them a-new. He introduces the men and women of his country to a luxuriance of metres, whose wild music makes them bear with the flame of his sentiments, and there is a subtle naivete in everything that comes out of him" (*Classical Poets of Gujarat*, pp. 67-68).

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